

EDITORIAL

A new horizon for the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics

This issue of the Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics (SJP) witnesses the cyber era for the Journal through its website: <http://www.sudanjp.com>. This will ensure wider visibility and fulfill its initial goals. The website contains the scanned past issues of SJP, as well as proceedings of local conferences in which original papers, dealing with child health, has been published. These proceedings preceded the establishment of SJP and included the seminal work of the pioneers of paediatrics in Sudan, as well as eminent international paediatricians. In this respect, we would like to thank the Sudan Medical Association and Prof. Mohamed ElMakki Ahmed, Editor-in-Chief of the Sudan Medical Journal for permitting us to scan this material and make it accessible through the SJP website. We would also like to thank all those who were behind the hard work which made this SJP cyber era a reality. The support of Prof. Mohamed Ahmed Abdullah, President of the Sudan Association of Paediatricians (SAP) is greatly appreciated, and the technical support of Adnan Mahmood Usmani, Coordinating Editor of SJP, and valuebox Company contributed admirably to this evolution of SJP.

The cover of SJP was modified to capture the civilizations that influenced Sudan. One of the pyramids of the Kushite rulers of Meroe, the Southern Capital of the Napta / Meroitic Kingdom (800BC-350AD) is shown in the background [1]. Also shown is the Meroitic script, the indigenous alphabet consisting of 23 letters, which has been developed in the Naptan Period at about 700-300BC. The Arabic script of the "Sudanese Journal of Paediatrics" was kept, reflecting the main language and culture following the migratory waves from the Arabian Peninsula to Sudan in the 12th

century. Thanks are due to Taha El Atta, PhD who designed this script in 1984 at the Sudan University College of Fine Arts.

In the 1984 issue of SJP (Vol 3 page 1), when an ISSN number was obtained (ISSN 0256-4408), it was stated that "expansion of the Journal to encompass the scientific work dealing with child health locally and abroad is particularly apt with the start of local postgraduate training in paediatrics which started to give its fruits in 1980". One of the major strengths of this local postgraduate training was that it also consisted of a thesis which should be submitted by the candidate as a pre-requisite requirement to qualify to sit the final part of the examination for the Master in Paediatrics and Child Health (MPCH, later renamed Clinical MD in Paediatrics and Child Health). Subsequently, parts of several of these were published as original articles and reviews in SJP and also in renowned international journals. Nevertheless, the majority still remain unpublished in scientific periodicals due to several logistic reasons [2]. This is the reason behind introducing a new section in SJP under the title "Original Article from Thesis". We hope this will encourage the publication of the important findings of these theses which has, so far, only been cited in their abstract forms. The importance of publishing a scientific manuscript in a peer reviewed biomedical journal, an important ingredient of research, is further highlighted in an invited Editorial on "Evaluation of Science".

Since its establishment in 1977, SJP addressed the major health problems facing the Sudanese children, as well as other children in the Developing World. The major challenges facing child health

were highlighted and management strategies were studied and evaluated. Studies included community approach in delivery of health services in rural areas [3], paediatric emergency admissions in relation to malnutrition [4], diarrhoeal diseases [5], epidemic meningitis [6], and childhood immunization [7]. As a continuation of this, the present issue starts with a review article on the role of the health system in the prevention of hearing loss among children in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Following the successful implementation of the Expanded Program of Immunization, and with the improvements in childhood nutrition, genetic diseases emerged in the new millennium as a significant health problem causing significant mortality and life-long morbidity [8]. The majority of these genetic disorders manifest in childhood with either neurobehavioural impairment or as degenerative neurological disorders. The high incidence of consanguineous marriages in

Sudan, North Africa and Arabia has been the reason behind the high prevalence of autosomal recessive (AR) disorders, in contrast to the situation in North America and Europe. This is the reason behind highlighting these disorders in a review and case reports in this SJP issue since many of them are amenable to primary or secondary prevention. The last new section "Historical Perspectives: Pioneers in Paediatrics" is also in line with this. The short biography of the late Prof. Mahmoud Mohamed Hassan, the first President of the Sudanese Association of Paediatricians (SAP) and first Chief-Editor of SJP, depicts clearly that he was an international pioneer in his field.

Lastly, special thanks are also due to the Executive Committee of SAP (November 2009-October 2011), Dr. Amani Nuri, and Members of the National and International Boards for the continued support to maintain the SJP thriving and fulfilling its goals.

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